PART VI

The European Neighbourhood Policy and the promotion of EU norms and values
Introduction

Since the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was first proposed in 2003, numerous viewpoints have been offered. Some have judged the policy as a welcome and positive means to further relations between the European Union (EU) and neighbouring countries. The ENP is, according to these observers, seen as an innovative form of foreign policy, representing an attempt to explore mutually beneficial cooperation, and potentially as a tool to project the EU’s ‘soft’ or transformative power beyond its borders (Landaburu 2006a; Lippert 2008; Delcour and Tulmets 2008; Hahn 2015). Yet others have been more sceptical. The policy has been held as an EU-centric, bureaucratic and inflexible exercise representing little added value for ENP countries (Popescu and Wilson 2009; Hollis 2012; Kostanyan 2015). The values and norms promotion component of the ENP, whether political, socioeconomic, cultural or even administrative, has been the feature that has drawn most comments and critique from both practitioners and those in academia. Few fail to note the importance of values and norms as markers of the EU’s international identity and thus ‘natural’ to the ENP as an expression of EU foreign policy (Chaban and Vemngora 2013). However, many also refer to such values and norms export as being conditioned by imposition and power asymmetries (Del Sarto 2007; Korosteleva 2011; Langbein and Wolczuk 2012).

To understand the array of reactions the policy has caused, this chapter will map the perceptions of the ENP among different stakeholders, as well as of the EU’s values and norms promotion. The chapter will focus on three key groupings: ENP countries’ governments, public opinion and civil society in ENP countries, and the EU, namely the European Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS), EU Member States and the European Parliament. We will, above all, account for the perceptions reported in the academic literature, although data from opinion polls will also be used when relevant. The result does not cover all actors or issues; however, it provides a snapshot of the predominant attitudes towards the ENP and the values and norms being promoted through it.

The first section of this chapter outlines the main views of ENP countries’ governments vis-à-vis the ENP, whereas the second section focuses on the opinions of ENP countries’ citizens and civil society actors. The third section deals with the EU actors’ attitudes towards the ENP.
ENP countries’ governments

An overview of scholarly accounts reveals that ENP governments initially greeted the ENP with mixed feelings when it was launched in 2004 (Wolczuk 2009; Bauer 2011; Hollis 2012). Some neighbours’ governments saw potential in the policy. For Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Georgia, the ENP fitted their desire to reduce their dependence on Russia by means of a multi-vector foreign and economic policy (Alieva 2006; Popescu and Wilson 2009; Korosteleva 2014). For Georgia, the ENP also generated a cautious ‘hope for a larger EU role in the region’ (Nuriyev 2008: 156), support for democratization processes, economic reform and, eventually, an open door to EU accession. In the southern neighbourhood, Jordan was enthusiastic, as the ENP appeared to offer greater access to the EU markets, financial aid and cooperation in specific sectorial areas (Kelley 2006). The Moroccan government gave the policy a similar ‘warm reception’, as Rabat interpreted it as a step towards the privileged economic relationship the country was seeking with the EU (Baracani 2009: 138). Israel also believed, at first, that the ENP represented a ‘genuinely positive opportunity’ for furthering bilateral trade relations between Israel and the European Union (Hollis 2012: 86). Both Morocco and Israel were moreover encouraged by the ENP’s focus on bilateral relations, as it allowed them to escape the constraints of the multilateral and, by the mid-2000s, stagnant Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (later transformed into the Union for the Mediterranean). Other governments were, however, less convinced about what the ENP had to offer. For determined eastern ENP countries, the policy was going to be a source of disappointment. Ukraine had hoped for a much more advantageous, tailor-made deal and, after the 2004 ‘Orange Revolution’, to be given a firm invitation to future EU membership talks. The Ukrainian government also reacted negatively to the fact that the ENP included non-European southern neighbourhood countries, as this was an impediment for Ukraine’s aspirations for EU accession. Korosteleva (2011: 254) reports Ukrainian officials expressing their ‘dissatisfaction’ and declaring the ENP as ‘conceptually unsuited for Ukraine’. In the southern neighbourhood, a majority of Arab governments were largely indifferent to the proposals. Many agreed to participate ‘simply because the European market was too important to them to ignore and the ENP promised both greater access and aid’ (Hollis 2012: 86), and thus to provide resources to ensure continued regime stability. A couple of governments, such as Algeria or Libya, declined the invitation to participate in the ENP, as the initiative did not seem to hold any added value for their relations with the EU.

The most optimistic perceptions of the policy began to waiver, once the negotiations for the first set of ENP Action Plans began. When some neighbours’ governments tried to introduce their own proposals during the ENP Action Plan consultation process, the Commission reportedly deterred such attempts and ENP countries were essentially encouraged to ‘take-it-or-leave-it’. Langbein and Wolczuk (2012: 879) argue that the Commission’s rationale was to seek ‘to minimize changes to the drafts, not only by the neighbouring countries, but also EU Member States, to ensure normative consistency across the whole neighbourhood’. This ‘one-size-fits-all’ methodology was also evident in the subsequent EEAS- and Commission-led negotiations with the eastern neighbours to conclude Association Agreements (AAs), including Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs) in the early 2010s. The Ukrainian AA/DCFTA later became the template, with only minor modifications, for similar agreements with Georgia and Moldova and was subsequently also proposed to Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia (Schumacher 2012). The insistence on normative consistency during the first decade of the policy, as opposed to a differentiated set of norms mutually agreed to by the EU and each ENP country, gave rise to a persistent perception of the ENP as an essentially EU-centric exercise with questionable added value for most ENP governments (Kostanyan 2015). Popescu and
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Wilson (2009: 11) argue that this EU-centrism generated ‘frustration with the ENP’ and elicited cynical perceptions among the political elite in different ENP countries.

Second, conditionality is another bone of contention for several ENP governments. However, interestingly enough, conditionality as a means for norm promotion was less controversial with these governments for the objectives it was trying to promote (EU values) than for its implications for their status as sovereign countries. Because conditionality is not a feature applied in the EU’s more important trade relations (for example, with the United States or with China), the use of financial and technical aid tied to political or economic concessions implicitly reduced ENP countries to a secondary rank. Among the EU’s eastern neighbours, Ukraine has been critical over how conditionality undermines its relative status vis-à-vis the EU in a way that might be uncalled for outside the context of a proper EU accession process. Azerbaijan bowed out from the EU’s invitation to sign an AA/DCFTA in 2013 and declared its intention to pursue a ‘strategic dialogue’ with the EU and its Member States, unsecured by conditional requirements. In the consultation process for the 2015 ENP review, both Algeria and Egypt voiced their resentment for the EU’s norm promotion and declared that the use of conditionality is not compatible with the ENP’s aim of establishing an equal partnership between the EU and its southern neighbourhood. In the case of Israel, it had expected that the EU would exempt it from political conditionality in its condition of being a democratic country with a working market economy. When the EU insisted on the use of conditionality, the EU–Israeli Action Plan talks became a drawn-out affair. Negotiations only ended successfully when conditional requirements were diluted to a point where the Israelis could ‘underscore the agreement’s economic advantages’ while completely downplaying ‘the political provisions, [. . .] particularly the WMD issue, by stressing that the agreement did not change the parameters of the country’s positions’ (Del Sarto 2007: 70). This allowed the Israeli government to give the appearance of guaranteeing the country’s political independence.

Finally, even the most reform-oriented ENP countries’ governments were to find the necessary administrative restructuring, to be able to implement the ENP Action Plans, especially challenging. In order to carry out the objectives of ENP Action Plans, extensive changes in the ENP countries’ administrative apparatus were often required, such as raising the accountability and efficiency in the national administration and judiciary, and ensuring ‘better coordination between different ministries to manage Brussels’ cross-sectoral demands’ (Pridham 2011: 28). The scale of these normative reforms for some ENP countries was considerable and political will frequently petered out prior to their successful completion. Ukraine, the eastern neighbour, which has perhaps attempted the most ambitious administrative reforms to achieve the objectives set out in the ENP Action Plans, has largely failed due to lack of domestic top-level political will and support from successive governments (Wolczuk 2009). The administrative adaptation has been difficult, even in countries with domestic reform plans predating the ENP. For Jordan, the ENP offered an opportunity to gain EU financial and technical assistance for its own ambitious plans for socioeconomic overhaul. Nevertheless, as the Jordanians were soon to find out, they simply did not have the capacity in either their public or their private sector to implement all the measures incorporated in the Action Plan they agreed with the EU (Hollis 2012: 86–87). In general, as a normative objective, administrative reform has become either unviable or outright undesirable for many other ENP countries.

In sum, some governments in ENP countries initially harboured expectations that the ENP could facilitate economic growth and supply substantial financial assistance and thereby ensure political stability in their respective countries. Such hopes vanished, however, once the talks for the ENP Action Plans got under way. The EU’s lack of flexibility, use of conditionality, and
the complexity of the administrative reforms required for their implementation have put a
damper on the policy from the standpoint of ENP countries’ governments. These perceptions
have led ENP countries’ governments to question the added value of the ENP for their respec-
tive countries and to issue repeated calls for reform, as was evident from their input to the 2011
and 2015 ENP review processes.

Public opinion and civil society in ENP countries

Citizens’ impressions of the policy, EU values and norms promotion, as reflected in public
opinion polls in ENP countries and academic literature, paint a varied picture. Overall, the
public opinion in the eastern and southern neighbourhood appears to have limited knowledge
of the ENP as a policy. Moreover, surveys indicate that a majority of citizens in ENP countries
do not feel well-informed about the specific role the EU plays in their country nor about the
EU’s financial and technical assistance (TNS Opinion 2012; 2013). In terms of the values and
norms promoted through the ENP, public opinion in both neighbourhoods tends to identify
the EU with values such as human rights, prosperity, solidarity and democracy (ibid.; Chaban
and Vernygora 2013). This has led Bengtson and Elgström (2012: 99) to conclude that citizens
of Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Moldova readily recognize ‘the attractiveness of
[the EU’s] normative agenda’. However, surveys in the eastern and the southern neighbor-
hoods also reveal that trade, tackling poverty and peace and security tend to be significantly
higher among respondents’ priorities in terms of areas where they would like to see more EU
involvement in their respective countries, rather than human rights or democracy assistance
(TNS Opinion 2012; 2013; Chaban and Vernygora 2013). Moreover, some values promoted
by the EU cause ambivalence in ENP countries. A study of public opinion in Algeria, Lebanon,
Morocco and the Palestinian Territories points out that they are positively inclined toward
democracy as a concept but simultaneously fearful of the real or perceived consequences of
democratization, like electoral violence, destabilization in a democratic transition, or socioeco-
nomic downturn (Benstead 2015). As for Israelis, the public tends to take a predominantly
negative view of the EU as a norm promoter. The EU is perceived as criticizing Israeli policies
designed to safeguard the country’s security and for not doing enough to prevent anti-Semitism
in EU countries (Pardo 2014).

There are some important geographical exceptions to the conclusion that the EU is not
predominantly seen as a normative power. Such perceptions are much more prominent in the
EU’s eastern and southern neighbourhoods. According to Bengtson and Elgström (2012: 99),
Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Moldova (but not Belarus) ‘readily recognize both
the great power status of the EU and the attractiveness of its normative agenda. [. . .] the civi-
lizing mission of the EU is perceived in positive [. . .] terms as a contribution to desirable trans-
formation’ (2012: 99). Among the general public in these countries, values such as human
rights, democracy and freedom of speech are frequently associated with Brussels. The EU is
seen as having contributed to developing democracy in these countries and human rights are
viewed as an important area of co-operation; however, in line with the general picture, trade
and economic development remain the areas where the most important role for the EU is
envisioned (TNS Opinion 2013).

A scrutiny of the academic literature on the attitudes of civil society organizations (CSOs) in
ENP countries shows that many such actors have a distinct feeling that the ENP is above all an
EU-to-governmental affair. Hence, even if engaging with civil society is an explicit aim of the
ENP, the EU ‘met only occasionally, and only with some NGOs [non-governmental organi-
zations], in the course of consultation over the Action Plans, and rarely against the wishes of the
partner government’ (Barbé and Johansson-Nogués 2008: 91; cf. Alieva 2006; Bosse 2010). Smith (2011: 396) therefore reports a strong perception among Armenian civil society associations, shared by other activists in the eastern neighbourhood, ‘that the EU treated CSOs as inferior to government actors. The government was seen as an equal partner [to the EU] and subsequently had a far greater role in formulating the AP [ENP Action Plan]’. In relation to southern neighbours, Del Sarto and Schumacher (2011: 946) note that ‘the buzzword of “co-ownership”’ translated into the ENP Action Plans being negotiated with the ENP governments and effectively excluded CSOs from such discussions. Transnational civil society platforms have since either been formed (Eastern Partnership [EaP]) or repurposed (Union for Mediterranean) to provide venues for civil society dialogue with the Commission, the EEAS, the European Parliament and individual Member States. The 2011 ENP review included two new instruments for assisting the work of civil society actors, such as the Civil Society Neighbourhood Facility and the European Endowment for Democracy. Finally, the 2011 and the 2015 ENP reviews have also been opened up to give civil society actors more voice opportunity in the policy design. Notwithstanding, these advances and numerous pledges on the part of the EEAS and the Commission to give civil society a more central role in the ENP appear to have had an uneven impact. Some civil society actors now reportedly feel that their concerns are being heard even at the policy design stage of the ENP/EaP (Kostanyan and Orbie 2013). Other CSOs continue to have the impression that they merely hover in the peripheries of the EU’s engagement with ENP countries’ governments (Natorski 2016).

Second, in terms of norms promotion, the ENP contains the objective of promoting an extensive array of shared values. A view held by many civil society actors in the EU’s neighbourhood is, however, that the EU’s norm promotion is far from achieving its full potential due to certain inconsistencies. First, ENP civil society organizations have not failed to notice that the EU’s support for CSOs working with sectorial issues such as internal market, environment or migration policy (Bicchi and Lavenex 2015; Natorski 2016) has been much more substantial compared to the support lent to their peers promoting democracy or human rights reforms (including torture and the death penalty). In his study on Armenia, Smith (2011: 396) reports a general perception among NGOs that the EU was prepared ‘to compromise its democracy and human rights policies’ in favour of its ‘more salient economic and strategic policies’. Reynaert (2011: 636), in a quantitative study on the EU’s southern neighbourhood, found that

[economic liberalization is the main goal of the EU’s policy in the region and both the state (the executive power and the judiciary) and the civil society are stimulated to support the functioning of the free market. Political and civil rights [...], defined as the core elements of a democracy, are mainly supported [by the EU] if they contribute to the functioning of the market.

It is also worth noting, as Teti et al. (2013) do, that CSOs working on socioeconomic rights or social repercussions arising from economic liberalization rarely figure on the EU’s aid radar. Moreover, civil society actors have accused the EEAS and the Commission of being unwilling norm promoters on democracy and human rights. The EEAS and the Commission have at times voluntarily limited their action in these areas. This self-imposed limitation has come in the form of EU Delegations in ENP countries, either not issuing project calls for such projects (Bicchi 2010) or preferring structured dialogues on these issues, also involving representatives of the respective governments (Teti et al. 2013). Finally, the EU and the ENP has done little to undo the great reluctance of ENP countries’ governments against independent NGOs working on democracy and human rights in their respective countries. The EU has frequently not even
reacted or reprimanded those governments that have erected significant bureaucratic impediments for, or legal persecution of, such civil society organizations’ activity (Johansson-Nogués 2006; Smith 2011).

In sum, public opinion and civil society actors in the EU’s neighbourhood do not see themselves as very informed or have ambivalent feelings about the ENP. By the broad public, the EU is readily identified as an actor with a normative agenda. However, surveys also show that the citizens in ENP countries generally would prefer the normative accent to be placed on short-term prosperity and solidarity. The civil society actors in the eastern and southern neighbourhoods have been of two minds about the ENP. Some feel supported by the ENP and that their concerns are being acknowledged by the EU, while others continue to have the view of the ENP as too focused on EU-to-governmental relations. Moreover, CSOs working in areas linked to market economic reforms, environment or migration policy are perceived as receiving more attention from the EU compared to human rights and democracy advocates.

**European Commission, EEAS, EU Member States and the European Parliament**

The European Commission’s perceptions of the ENP and the norms and values promoted are portrayed in the scholarly literature as starting off buoyantly at the launch of the ENP, only to subsequently become somewhat subdued (Kelley 2006; Korosteleva 2011). From the Commission’s vantage point, the ENP was, in the words of ENP Task Force Director General Eneko Landaburu, ‘a truly modern foreign policy, harnessing and integrating instruments from across the spectrum – from support for human rights to judicial reform to elections, support for institution-building, increased political dialogue and cooperation on crisis management’ (Landaburu 2006a: 2). Moreover, the Commission appeared to harbour no doubts in the mid-2000s that the values and norms that it was trying to advance through the ENP were the adequate ones. The legitimacy of the ENP’s values and norms promotion stemmed from the EU’s success with the internal market, as well as from ‘the normative power of the acquis communautaire’ (Landaburu 2006b).

The initially upbeat view of the ENP in the Commission was linked to the fact that the ENP allowed the Commission to continue as a protagonist in the EU’s external action, even as enlargement became less prominent on the EU’s agenda from 2004. During the eastern enlargement process, ‘the Commission came to perceive itself as an important foreign policy actor’ (Kelley 2006: 31). When the Commission was entrusted with the conceptualization and implementation of the ENP, before its launch, former Directorate-General (DG) Enlargement officials, reassigned to new positions within the ENP Task Force at the DG External Relations, thus saw the new policy as an ‘extension and adaptation of the Commission’s active foreign policy role during enlargement’ (ibid.). However, by the late 2000s, the Commission woke up to the sober realization that neighbours’ governments, citizens, civil society and EU members alike were dissatisfied with the ENP and with the way the Commission was handling the policy (Schumacher 2012). Discontent also began to spread within the Commission itself. One scholar reports that interviewed representatives of the Commission ‘were very critical of the ENP/EaP, pointing to the lack of clarity and coherence, the heavy bureaucracy and a reactive (rather than prospective) engagement’ (Korosteleva 2011: 249). The European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, Stefan Füle, and his successor, the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement, Johannes Hahn, have also voiced their criticism of the ENP in the context of the ENP reviews of 2011 and 2015. For example, in 2015 and
before the completion of the review process, Commissioner Hahn gave a negative assessment of ENP’s one-size-fits-all methodology, its unfocused agenda and its attempt to impose values and norms (Hahn 2015).

The EEAS, which replaced DG External Relations as the principal institutional actor in charge of agenda-setting for and monitoring the ENP after the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, also initially held a favourable view of the policy. High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission (HRVP) Catherine Ashton’s first impression of the ENP was that it was ‘a success story with many examples of concrete achievements on the ground’ (European Commission 2010). However, once the Arab uprisings began in 2011, the HRVP and the EEAS, together with other EU institutions and with Member States, offered a *mea culpa* and recognized ‘the divorce between “words and deeds” [that] defined the EU’s contradictory approach towards its neighbouring countries’ (Natorski 2016: 657), in particular when it came to the promotion of values and norms. The level of EEAS satisfaction with the ENP appears still low, as HVRP Federica Mogherini, in the context of the 2015 ENP review, critiqued the ENP for being too EU-centric, disproportionately favouring EU interest and not assiduous enough in pursuing the original objectives of the policy such as equal partnership, differentiation, prosperity and finding ways to ‘effectively work together on our common purposes’ (EEAS 2015).

The EU Member States’ governments’ perception of the ENP is unquestionably multifaceted. The EU Member States are the original initiative takers of the ENP and hence initially saw a strong need for the policy’s launch. This felt necessity is still present as the literature reports that an overwhelming majority of Member States agree to the idea of the ENP being the main conduit for EU-neighbouring countries and that the *acquis communautaire* should be the basis for the EU’s value and norm promotion (Lippert 2007; Korosteleva 2011). However, it is fair to note that the interest for the ENP is not equally strong among all Member States. Some Member States (France, Poland, the Baltic states and Sweden) have over time shown relatively more concern and direct implication in the policy than others (Behr 2015; Kostanyan 2015). Moreover, disagreement exists among EU Member States over how and where the EU’s values and norms should be promoted. To a pro-eastern neighbourhood grouping (Northern and Central European Member States) the ENP should be a vehicle for transforming the eastern neighbourhood in the short to medium term and in a proactive way, by upholding democracy and human rights values so central to some of these countries’ own post-communist/post-Cold War transitions and by extending an explicit EU membership perspective (Natorski 2007). They have therefore strongly argued for more of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), and its successor the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), to be geared towards the eastern neighbourhood for norms promotion purposes. This contrasts sharply with the pro-southern neighbourhood coalition (southern EU Member States) that has, since the inception of the ENP, advocated for a more pragmatic approach geared towards promoting norms in the longer term as long as regional stability is not upset. They have also maintained a close eye on the ENPI/ENI to ensure that sufficient funds are allocated to the much more populous southern neighbourhood (Behr 2015). In the 2011 ENP review, a compromise was brokered whereby the pro-southern grouping achieved a greater allocation of ENP funds to the South, while the pro-eastern grouping gained a commitment to placing greater demands for reforms on ENP countries’ governments. The use of both positive and/or negative conditionality was therefore backed (Bicchi 2014). In contrast, the 2015 ENP review appears to have caused most Member States to all but abandon the strong normative rhetoric of the 2011 ENP review on promoting substantial human rights and ‘deep democracy’. The disjointedness of the EU Member States’ attitudes to norms promotion can perhaps be summarized, as
Noutcheva (2015: 24) does, that ‘[i]n theory, no EU Member State will ever oppose “deep and comprehensive democracy” as an aspiration and goal for the neighbourhood. In practice, they may do little to advance it’ (cf. Del Sarto and Schumacher 2011).

The European Parliament’s perception of the ENP has varied substantially over the years. When the policy was first launched, the Parliament recognized the need for the policy and approved of its general set-up as well as of the Commission’s methodology (Leinen and Weidemann 2007). However, since then, the Parliament has periodically been critical of the lack of support for EU membership aspirations among eastern neighbours and attention to human rights and democratic standards in both neighbourhoods (such as Israel and Azerbaijan). In the 2015 ENP review, the Parliament criticized the methodology applied by the EU – that is, approaching relations as ‘technocratic exercises, while overlooking the political consequences’ (Kukan 2015). These EU shortcomings, in the words of the Parliament’s Special Rapporteur for the ENP, Eduard Kukan, have meant that ‘over a decade on, the EU’s neighbourhood to the east and south could be described as less democratic, prosperous and secure than it was in 2004’ (ibid.).

In sum, the ENP was initially perceived highly positively by the European Commission, as it allowed the institution to maintain the high profile in foreign policy it had acquired during the EU’s eastern enlargement. However, by the end of the 2000s, it had begun to come to terms with the fact that the ENP was failing to have the same transformative effect and normative suasion that EU accession had had on Central and Eastern European countries. The EEAS is a relative newcomer in the context of the ENP, but in its short institutional life it has still shown relative lucidity on the shortcomings of the ENP and its norm promotion. As for the Member States and the European Parliament, they agree on having an ENP but they disagree about its norm promotion component.

Conclusions

The ENP has received intense attention in the past decade and many opinions have been offered. Initially, some ENP countries’ governments and civil society actors, as well as the European Commission and EU Member States, found reasons for optimism. However, with the passing of time, this sanguinity appears to have faded. Once the Commission translated the ENP concept into concrete Action Plans, the limitations of the offer became clear to ENP governments, citizens and civil society actors, and eventually also to the Commission itself and the Member States. ENP governments have judged the policy to be EU-centric and too complex to implement. The public opinion in ENP countries at large remains fairly unaware of the ENP and its goals. Civil society actors have deemed the ENP mainly as an EU-to-government affair where civil society actors, especially in the area of democracy and human rights, play a largely figurative role. The ENP has therefore failed to gain traction in ENP countries and the EU is perceived as ambiguous on values and norms promotion.

The EU actors have not been unaware of the many problems inherent to the ENP. It is clear that the ENP’s performance and value and norms promotion have suffered from a combination of lack of Member States’ political will and internal bickering, as well as EU’s institutions’ – at first the Commission, and later the EEAS and the Commission combined – failure to find a coherent modus operandi for the ENP. In spite of this awareness and various rounds of reform, the overall intra-EU perception appears to be that the ENP has yet to unleash its full potential for organizing EU-neighbourhood relations, a task made more challenging by the changing geopolitical circumstances in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings or the Russian intervention in Ukraine.
Notes

1 The Action Plan for Belarus was later not activated by the EU and it became a ‘reluctant observer’ of the ENP, only to join the Eastern Partnership’s multilateral track in 2009 (Korosteleva 2014: 111).

2 This view is also corroborated by interviews with European Commission officials responsible for the consultations for the ENP Action Plans who ‘expressed positive surprise at how willing the first seven partner countries [sic] were to include human rights and democratization issues in the action plans’ (Kelley 2006: 33).

References


Hahn, J. (2015) Speech by Commissioner Hahn on Theorizing the European Neighbourhood Policy, College of Europe, 17 September.


